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ABSTRACT

These 18 self-assessment guides and training manual from the Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) for Student Services/Development Programs translate the CAS Standards and Guidelines of 1986 into a format for self-study purposes. These self-study guides allow an institution to assure compliance with minimally-acceptable practice, gain an informed perspective on strengths and deficiencies, plan for program improvement, and prepare for review by external evaluators. The training manual outlines these eight steps in using the guides: (1) determine a self-study approach; (2) decide on inclusion of any guidelines; (3) examine criterion statements before making preliminary judgments; (4) identify and summarize evaluative evidence; (5) describe discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice; (6) delineate required corrective actions; (7) recommend any special actions for program enhancement; and (8) prepare a statement of overall action. The self-assessment guides include these functional areas: general-division level; academic advising; admissions programs and services; career planning and placement; college unions; commuter student programs and services; counseling services; disabled student services; fraternity and sorority advising; housing and residential life programs; judicial programs and services; learning assistance programs; minority student programs and services; recreational sports; religious programs; research and evaluation; student activities; and student orientation programs. Described in each self-assessment guide are the standards and guidelines, the roles of documentation and assessment in the self-study process, and the steps for developing a follow-up action plan. The second section of the self-assessment guide is in worksheet format for evaluation. The final section reprints the CAS standards and guidelines for this functional area. An evaluation survey of the self-assessment guides is included. (ABL)

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# PUTTING THE CAS STANDARDS TO WORK

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## Council for the Advancement of Standards for Student Services/Development Programs

## 1988

Developed by Jean M. Yerian

# CAS
## Council for the Advancement of Standards for Student Services/Development Programs

## Training Manual for the CAS Self Assessment Guides

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This *Training Manual* has been developed by CAS for those who wish to learn about or instruct others in the use of the *CAS Standards* and *Self Assessment Guides*. Permission is granted to reproduce this document for local use.

The manual is designed so that users can make transparencies from the graphics masters. Each script section is on the page opposite from the corresponding graphic for ease of presentation. The script begins below....

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Cover Transparency

This training sequence will introduce you to CAS, the Council for the Advancement of Standards for Student Services/Development Programs, and to its publications, the *CAS STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES* and the *CAS SELF ASSESSMENT GUIDES*.



The sequence will help you put the CAS standards to work.

# PUTTING

# THE

# CAS STANDARDS

# TO WORK

The Council for the Advancement of Standards for Student Services/ Development Programs was established to improve and advance student development services and educational opportunities in postsecondary education institutions and to promote professional inter-association efforts.

CAS pursued three goals. The **first** was to establish, adopt, and disseminate two types of standards and guidelines, one for student services and student development programs and the other for the preparation of professional practitioners for the field.

The **second** goal was to assist professionals and institutions in using and implementing the CAS Standards and Guidelines to evaluate and improve student services and development programs and professional preparation programs through program development or accreditation self-study.

**Third**, CAS strove to establish a system of regular evaluation of standards and guidelines to keep pace with the changing needs and practices of the profession. This evaluation was intended to result in periodic amendments and dissemination of updated standards and guidelines.

# CAS GOALS

1. Establish, adopt, and disseminate standards and guidelines for

   - student services and student development programs

   - preparation of professional practitioners for the field.

2. Assist professionals and institutions to use standards and guidelines for program and accreditation self-study.

3. Establish a system of regular evaluation of standards and guidelines to keep pace with changes in the field.

Here are the current member associations of the CAS consortium of student affairs professional associations:

- American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD)
- American College Personnel Association (ACPA)
- Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)
- Association for School, College and University Staffing (ASCUS)
- Association of College and University Housing Officers - International (ACUHO-I)
- Association of College Unions International (ACU-I)
- Association of Fraternity Advisors (AFA)
- Association of University and College Counseling Center Directors (AUCCCD)

# CAS MEMBERS

*American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD)*

*American College Personnel Association (ACPA)*

*Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)*

*Association for School, College and University Staffing (ASCUS)*

*Association of College and University Housing Officers-International (ACUHO-I)*

*Association of College Unions-International (ACU-I)*

*Association of Fraternity Advisors (AFA)*

*Association of University and College Counseling Center Directors (AUCCCD)*

- Association on Handicapped Student Services Programs in Postsecondary Education (AHSSPPE)

- College Placement Council (CPC)

- National Academic Advising Association (NACADA)

- National Association for Women Deans, Administrators and Counselors (NAWDAC)

  National Association of Campus Activities (NACA)

- National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC)

- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)

- National Clearinghouse for Commuter Programs (NCCP)

*Association on Handicapped Student Services Programs in Postsecondary Education (AHSSPPE)*

*College Placement Council (CPC)*

*National Academic Advising Association (NACADA)*

*National Association for Women Deans, Administrators and Counselors (NAWDAC)*

*National Association of Campus Activities (NACA)*

*National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC)*

*National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)*

*National Clearinghouse for Commuter Programs (NCCP)*

- National Council on Student Development (NCSD)
  [A Council of AACJC: American Association of Community and Junior Colleges]

- National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA)

- National Orientation Directors Association (NODA)

- Southern Association of College Student Affairs (SACSA)

The process used by the Council for the Advancement of Standards for Student Services/Development Programs in formulating the standards and guidelines involved this wide array of professional associations, plus individual professionals, consultants, and public-sector representatives. CAS developed both a set of General Standards (applicable to all areas) and seventeen Functional Area Standards and Guidelines (for areas like academic advising and college unions) --the process, outlined here, involved many drafts and redrafts:

*National Council on Student Development (NCSD, A Council of AACJC)*

*National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA)*

*National Orientation Directors Association (NODA)*

*Southern Association of College Student Affairs (SACSA)*

- Member associations of CAS identified areas in which standards were needed.

- Member associations submitted drafts of standards for areas in which they had an interest and/or expertise, then all drafts for a particular functional area went to committees with three or more knowledgeable CAS directors for creation of a single, unified document.

- The CAS Executive Committee edited, revised, and consolidated the "unified" drafts.

- Member associations circulated these drafts widely for comment and the executive committee then made appropriate revisions.

- The Council adopted each standard and guideline statement by at least a two-thirds vote of the authorized voting board.

- "Adopted" functional area standards and guidelines went to two or more nationally recognized experts in the area and to both the profession and the broader higher education community for review and suggested revisions. The member associations established internal mechanisms to disseminate and review the standards and guidelines and to propose alterations.

- The Executive Committee evaluated amendment proposals and then recommended changes to the Council, which decided whether to amend a given standard or guideline.

In 1986, CAS published the "blue book" of standards and guidelines and, with the help of ACT [American College Testing Program], sent two complimentary copies to every college and university in the country, one for the chief executive officer and one for the chief student affairs officer.

# CAS PROCESS

- areas identified for standards development
- drafts submitted
- "unified" drafts reviewed
- drafts distributed by associations for comment
- standards and guidelines (S&G) adopted for public dissemination
- S&G reviewed
- S&G published (1986)
- "blue book"sent to every US college and university

5

The CAS Standards are organized into 13 component parts, presented in the following order:

- Mission
- Program
- Leadership and Management
- Organization and Administration
- Human Resources
- Funding
- Facilities
- Legal Responsibilities
- Equal Opportunity, Access, and Affirmative Action
- Campus and Community Relations
- Multi-Cultural Programs and Services
- Ethics
- Evaluation

# CAS COMPONENTS

1. Mission
2. Program
3. Leadership and Management
4. Organization and Administration
5. Human Resources
6. Funding
7. Facilities
8. Legal Issues
9. Equal Opportunity, Access, and Affirmative Action
10. Campus and Community Relations
11. Multi-Cultural
12. Ethics
13. Evaluation

6

The General Standards are applied at the division level and in conjunction with each functional area.

Functional area standards and guidelines are specific to specialty areas within student affairs or within other institutional divisions. It is important to note that separate offices or personnel are not required for each area, though institutions should address each of the applicable basic functions. (However, a college without student residences or social fraternities and sororities would not be expected to address the Housing and Residential Programs or the Fraternity and Sorority Advising standards and guidelines.)

Currently there are standards for the following functional areas:

- Academic Advising
- Admission Programs and Services

  [adopted in 1987 and issued as a separate CAS document]
- Career Planning and Placement
- College Unions
- Commuter Student Programs and Services
- Counseling Services
- Disabled Student Services
- Fraternity and Sorority Advising
- Housing and Residential Life Programs
- Judicial Programs and Services

# CAS AREAS

***Division-Level Standards***

***Academic Advising***

***Admission Programs and Services#***

***Career Planning and Placement***

***College Unions***

***Commuter Student Programs and Services***

***Counseling Services***

***Disabled Student Services***

***Fraternity and Sorority Advising***

***Housing and Residential Life Programs***

***Judicial Programs and Services***

***#published in 1987 (all others in 1986)***

- Learning Assistance Programs
- Minority Student Programs and Services
- Recreational Sports
- Religious Programs
- Research and Evaluation
- Student Activities
- Student Orientation Programs

Additionally, CAS adopted Preparation Standards and Guidelines at the Master's Degree Level for Student Services/Development Professionals in Postsecondary Education. These standards recognize three basic dimensions of professional practice and so address three major emphases of professional preparation: student development, administration, and counseling.

*Learning Assistance Programs*

*Minority Student Programs and Services*

*Recreational Sports*

*Religious Programs*

*Research and Evaluation*

*Student Activities*

*Student Orientation Programs*

*Student Preparation S&G at the Master's Degree Level*

The CAS Standards represent essential elements expected of any institution and its student services and student development programs. All institutions with minimally-acceptable programs and services must be able to satisfy the requirements. Standards in the functional areas are essential components of acceptable practice, not necessarily the ideal, most desirable, or best practice. In CAS documents, all standards are in **bold print**, presented as **MUST** statements.

CAS Guidelines speak to recommended, but not essential, elements of programs and practice. They should be viewed as examples and suggestions that are consistent with the Council's definition of appropriate, effective professional practice or professional preparation. The guidelines are used to explain, amplify, or interpret the meaning of standards through the use of examples and more detailed explanations. Guidelines appear in regular print and are stated as "shoulds."

# CAS TERMS

## STANDARDS

**-essential components of minimally-acceptable practice**

**-not necessarily the ideal, most desirable, or best**

**-in bold print ("must")**

## GUIDELINES

-recommended, but not essential, elements

-examples and suggestions used to explain, amplify, or interpret

-in regular print ("should")

**9**

The examples used in this training sequence are all from the CAS Academic Advising Standards and Guidelines. Please keep in mind, however, that there are seventeen other functional area standards and guidelines, plus the masters level preparation standards.

Here are two excerpts that contrast standards and guidelines.

- Note that the standard is defined in such a way as to allow for variations in institutional approaches to advising:

**The design of the academic advising program must be compatible with the institutional organizational structure and student needs. Specific advisor responsibilities must be clearly delineated, published, and disseminated to both advisors and students.**

(CAS Academic Advising Standard, 1986, p. 11)

The guideline here amplifies and interprets the standard:

In some institutions, academic advising is a centralized function, while in others, it is decentralized, with a variety of people throughout the institution assuming responsibilities. Whatever system is used, students, faculty, and staff members should be aware of their respective responsibilities.

(CAS Academic Advising Guideline, 1986, p. 11)

The guideline expands on the standard by suggesting that student responsibilities in the advising process should also be clearly addressed.

# STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

## STANDARD

**The design of the academic advising program must be compatible with the institutional organizational structure and student needs. Specific advisor responsibilities must be clearly delineated, published, and disseminated to both advisors and students.**

## GUIDELINE

In some institutions, academic advising is a centralized function, while in others, it is decentralized, with a variety of people throughout the institution assuming responsibilities. Whatever system is used, students, faculty, and staff members should be aware of their respective responsibilities.

The *CAS Standards and Guidelines* has been used as a reference document for programs across the country, but there has been a need for an applications tool as well. Now CAS introduces the *Self Assessment Guides.*

These 1989 publications translate the CAS Standards and Guidelines into a format which you can use to:

- assure compliance with minimally-acceptable levels of practice,
- gain an informed perspective on your program's strengths and deficiencies, and
- plan for program improvement.

In addition to these internal functions, the *Guides* can help practitioners prepare for review by external evaluators, such as accrediting agencies.

Using the *Guides* is an 8-step process.

Let's look at the steps now, then work through the process.

# Introducing

## SELF ASSESSMENT GUIDES

- 1988 publication

- translate CAS S&G (1986) into a format for self-study purposes so you can:

  -assure compliance with minimally-acceptable practice

  -gain an informed perspective on strengths and deficiencies

  -plan for program improvement

  -prepare for review by external evaluators

- 8-step process

Here is an outline of the steps involved in using the *Guides*:

**First,** you will need to determine a self-study approach.

**Second,** you will decide on whether to include any of the guidelines in your assessment and, if you so decide, which ones.

**Third,** you will need to examine individual criterion statements before making preliminary judgments on the 5-point rating scale.

**Fourth,** and quite importantly, you will identify and summarize evaluative evidence and related documentation to support your ratings.

**Fifth,** you will describe any discrepancies you find between the assessment criteria and actual program practice.

**Sixth,** you will then delineate required corrective actions so that your program can be in compliance.

**Seventh,** you will recommend any special actions for program enhancement above and beyond the CAS Standards.

**Eighth,** and finally, you will prepare a statement of overall action that you plan to implement as a result of the self-study process.

Now let's look at each of the steps in detail.

# OUTLINE

1. *Determine a self-study approach.*
2. *Decide on any inclusion of guidelines.*
3. *Examine criterion statements before making preliminary judgments.*
4. *Identify and summarize evaluative evidence.*
5. *Describe discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice.*
6. *Delineate required corrective actions.*
7. *Recommend any special actions for program enhancement.*
8. *Prepare a statement of overall action.*

The first step is to determine a self-study approach. What you see here is a reproduction of the top lines of the *Academic Advising Self Assessment Guide*. Note the space for inserting both the rater's and institution's names.

You can use the *Guides* in either of two ways:

- by developing internal consensus through group discussion and review

or

- by combining individual responses of internal reviewers to determine a group perspective.

Keep in mind that the *Guides*' purpose is to facilitate assessment and to review integrated programs in ways that go well beyond simply rating the criterion statements.

## *1. Determine a self-study approach.*

CAS *ACADEMIC ADVISING* STANDARDS
SELF ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

**Rater:**_____

**Institution:**_____

- **facilitate assessment**
- **review integrated programs**
- **go beyond simple ratings**

**A. develop internal consensus**

**OR** **(suitable for either)**

**B. combine individual ratings**

13

The next step is a decision step. Because programs differ, you may wish to look beyond the CAS Standards and include some aspects of the Guidelines in your review. Let's look at an example, again from the academic advising area.

Here you see part of a guideline which expands on a standard that specifies a clearly written statement of philosophy pertaining to academic advising which must include program goals. Let's say that your institution has a strong mission in terms of experiential learning. You may want to excerpt the part of the guideline here that makes one goal of academic advising the selection of both appropriate courses **and other** educational experiences.

Note that there is space in the *Guides* themselves to cite any CAS Guidelines to be assessed. If you use this approach, you also need to formulate an assessment criterion statement for each guideline used. One possibility might be this: the goals for academic advising include selection of appropriate non-classroom experiences.

Remember that the inclusion of guidelines as criterion measures in the self assessment process is totally up to you.

## 2. Decide on any inclusion of guidelines.

Institutional goals for academic advising may include:

- clarification of life and career goals;
- development of suitable educational plans;
- selection of appropriate courses and other educational experiences;
- interpretation of institutional requirements;
- increasing student awareness of educational resources available;
- evaluation of student progress toward established goals;
- development of decision-making skills;
- reinforcement of student self-direction;
- referral to and use of other institutional and community support services,

Cite any CAS Guidelines to be assessed as an institutional criterion for the self-study:

_____

_____

_____

_____

**The goals for academic advising include selection of appropriate non-classroom experiences.**

The third step involves beginning the rating process as you examine criterion statements before making preliminary judgments. The *Guides* provide assessment criteria for each segment of the standards.

Here are the criteria for the mission component of the Academic Advising Standards. This section of the *Guides*, which includes a **5-point rating scale**, is a vehicle to be used in obtaining subjective estimates of the degree to which a given criterion has been met.

Remember that several people may be making these judgments and that consistency between raters is not automatic. If at all possible, structured discussions to increase interrater reliability should be initiated as part of the training process.

# 3. Examine criterion statements before making preliminary judgments.

**Instructions:**

Use this scale to rate assessment criteria listed below. Place ratings in the space to the right of each criterion statement. Use Unknown (UK) response only if documentation or other information is unavailable.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | UK |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Noncompliance | | | | Compliance | Unknown |

**Part 1: MISSION**

| **Assessment Criteria:** | **Scale Score** |
|---|---|
| 1.1 There exists a well developed, written set of academic advising goals that are consistent with the stated mission of the institution. | 1.1 _____ |
| 1.2 The advising program goals are consistent with the stated student services/development goals of the institution. | 1.2. _____ |
| 1.3 These goal statements are reviewed and disseminated on a regular basis. | 1.3. _____ |
| 1.4 The goals and objectives of the academic advising program are consistent with the CAS Standards. | 1.4. _____ |
| 1.5 The mission of academic advising is to aid students in developing valid educational plans that are compatible with their life goals. | 1.5. _____ |
| 1.6 There exists an institution-wide written philosophical statement concerning academic advising that includes clearly defined goals as well as the expectations placed upon advisors and students alike. | 1.6. _____ |

- vehicle to obtain subjective estimates of the degree to which a given criterion has been met

- consistency not automatic

- rater discussion/training suggested

Here is an example from the *Academic Advising Self Assessment Guide* of how a particular assessment criterion might be interpreted. The criterion statement reads:

**1.1 There exists a well developed, written set of academic advising goals that are consistent with the stated mission of the institution.**

Possible responses for the five points of the scale might be:

A rating of one (1), noncompliance, would reflect the lack of any written goals.

A point higher on the scale (2) might be used to indicate that written goals exist but that they are not compiled in one document.

A midpoint rating (3) in terms of compliance could mean that a set of written goals exists, but there is an issue regarding consistency with the institutional mission which requires attention.

A rating of four (4) might indicate that a set of written goals exists that is consistent with the institution's mission, but that the developmental process could well have been stronger.

A rating of five (5) would mean complete compliance with all elements of the assessment criterion statement.

Talking through similar examples with those who will be involved in the rating process is an advisable training strategy.

Part 1: MISSION

Assessment Criteria:

1.1 There exists a well developed, written set of academic advising goals that are consistent with the stated mission of the institution.

**For the 1.1 statement, possible responses might include:**

**1 - no written goals exist**

**2 - written goals exist but are not compiled in one document**

**3 - a set of written goals exists but there is an issue regarding consistency with the institutional mission**

**4 - a set of written goals consistent with the institutional mission exists but the development process could well have been stronger**

**5 - all the elements of the criterion statement are fully met**

The next step is an absolutely crucial one. You must identify and summarize evaluative evidence to support the preliminary judgments.

It is important to note that rating the assessment criteria in the *Guides* is **NOT** the end point of the self-study process. Ratings, whether done on an individual or a collective basis, constitute a necessary, but not sufficient, part of any self-study. The process also requires documentation and action planning.

# Crucial

***4. Identify and summarize evaluative evidence.***

**It is important to note that**

**rating the assessment criteria**

**in the Guides is not the end point**

**of the self-study process.**

**The process also requires**

**documentation**

**and**

**action planning.**

Recall the assessment criterion statement earlier:

**1.1 There exists a well developed written set of academic advising goals that are consistent with the stated mission of the institution.**

Quantitative data that might support a given rating include the institution's mission statement and the written academic advising goals for both the institution as a whole and its various instructional units. Qualitative data might include notes on the process and procedures used to develop those goals.

Can you think of other examples?

# DOCUMENTATION DATA

## QUANTITATIVE

- -institutional mission statement
- -written academic advising goals

## QUALITATIVE

- -notes on process taken to develop goals

Here are examples of the types of data that can and should be used to support evaluative judgments:

- relevant publications, such as mission statements, catalogs, handbooks, staff manuals, policy manuals, and annual reports;

- descriptions of existing programs and interventions, such as a career development center, an alcohol awareness workshop, a test anxiety reduction group, a student orientation program, or an academic advising center; and

- program evaluation data, such as results from surveys, ratings, or interviews and written reports and summaries.

Much of this may already be at hand and in use. Can you think of specific sources presently available in your office?

# SAMPLE DATA LIST

## RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS

- mission statements
- catalogues
- handbooks
- staff manuals
- policy manuals
- annual reports

## DESCRIPTIONS OF EXISTING PROGRAMS AND INTERVENTIONS

- Career Development Center
- alcohol awareness workshop
- test anxiety reduction groups
- new student orientation
- Advising Center

## PROGRAM EVALUATION DATA

- surveys
- ratings
- interviews
- reports
- summaries

In addition, you may need to obtain other data from elsewhere in the institution or even gather additional information as part of the self-study process. Here are some examples of such data:

- relevant institutional and other data, such as student profiles; quantitative data; student needs assessments; theory-based assessments; and state, regional, and national data for making comparisons;

- self-study initiated research and evaluation data, such as student surveys, ratings, follow-ups, and theory-based research studies designed to evaluate various aspects of the program/department/division using CAS Standards as measurement criteria; and

- other documents, such as resumes, job descriptions, budgets, and organization charts.

Depending on the assessment criterion statement, many types of supporting data could be relevant.

Let's look at another example.

## RELEVANT INSTITUTIONAL AND OTHER DATA

- student profiles
- quantitative data
- student needs assessments
- theory-based assessments
- state, regional, and national data for comparisons

## SELF-STUDY INITIATED RESEARCH AND EVALUATION DATA

- student surveys
- ratings
- follow-ups
- theory-based research studies designed to evaluate various aspects of the program/department/division using CAS Standards as measurement criteria

## OTHER DOCUMENTS

- resumes
- job descriptions
- budgets
- organization charts

This criterion statement comes from the Human Resources section of the *Academic Advising Self Assessment Guide*:

**5.1 Academic advising has sufficient numbers of professional advisors to carry out all aspects of the program.**

Both quantitative and qualitative data might be used to support a rating here. Quantitative data could include advisor-to-student ratios or information on the length of time a student has to wait for help after requesting assistance. For instance, is the average waiting period counted in minutes, hours, days, or even weeks? Other relevant data might include quantitative responses to an institutional survey.

Qualitative measures, which may give a fuller picture from the student perspective, are often more time-consuming or labor-intensive. In this instance you might want to know not only how quickly students are served or how they respond to a given set of questions, but also how satisfied they are with all aspects of the advising program. Other qualitative approaches might include a focused group on academic advising or a random follow-up phone call to every tenth student served to determine both how well the information obtained by phone matches previously collected quantitative data and what other perspectives on service satisfaction students would share.

# DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLE

**ASSESSMENT CRITERION:**

**5.1 Academic advising has sufficient numbers of professional advisors to carry out all aspects of the program.**

—

**quantitative —**

**length of wait**

**survey on advising results**

**qualitative —**

**student satisfaction checks done by random follow-up phone calls**

Obviously documentation of preliminary judgments is at the heart of the self assessment process. No self-study is complete without relevant data and related documentation to support staff judgments.

In many instances the rating process will identify a need to collect additional data in order to evaluate a given criterion or to document the importance of providing new program offerings where none currently exist.

Here is assessment criterion statement 2.4 from the program component of the *Academic Advising Guide*:

**2.4 The advising program is responsive to the developmental and demographic profiles of the students served.**

Only if raters already know or have access to the profiles of advised students can they even address this statement.

Now that we have covered in some detail the documentation aspects of the self-study process, let's move on to the next step.

# FINAL THOUGHTS ON DOCUMENTATION

**NO SELF-STUDY IS COMPLETE WITHOUT RELEVANT DATA AND RELATED DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT STAFF JUDGMENTS.**

**In many instances the self-study rating process will identify the need to collect additional data.**

**EXAMPLE:**

**The advising program is responsive to the developmental and demographic profiles of the students served.**

**(Only if you already know what the profiles of served students look like can you even address the statement.)**

Once preliminary judgments have been made and adequate documentation identified to support them, we are ready for the fifth step, describing discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice.

On this transparency you can see the lines which appear in the *Guides*, asking you to describe any discrepancies between what you found in practice and full compliance with the standard.

Only if we define the compliance problem clearly can we hope to find a viable solution. Using the earlier example from the academic advising area, the only problem might be that a well-understood and well-developed set of goals has never been placed in written form and published.

By outlining discrepancies fully, practitioners can be sure that they will be addressing all aspects of the problem, rather than simply shifting that problem to a new form.

## *5. Describe discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice.*

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | UK |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Non-Compliance | | | Compliance | | Unknown |

If other than compliance, describe the discrepancies:

_____

_____

_____

_____

**- only if you can define the problem clearly can you hope to find a viable solution**

**- outline discrepancies fully to address all aspects of the problem**

**(not just shift it to a new form)**

The next step is to delineate required corrective actions. The lines in the *Guides* call for actions needed before compliance can be achieved.

First of all, you need to describe in some detail the desired state of affairs (that is, criteria for full compliance) and take into account any intermediate steps needed to reach that desired state. It is important to subdivide the task into manageable parts.

For the mission example, the entry here might be that you need to draft a statement of the goals you believe have already been agreed upon, circulate those to all staff for comment, and then disseminate a final statement. That sequence would, in all probability, bring the program into full compliance.

## *6. Delineate required corrective actions.*

Actions needed [required] for compliance:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

- describe in detail the desired state of affairs, the end result sought

- outline intermediate steps

- break the task into manageable parts

A self-study process, however, should go beyond minimal expectations. The next step is to recommend special actions for program enhancement. This is an area where staff members may wish to bring some of the CAS Guidelines into play, even if they were not used previously in the rating process itself.

Even excellent programs have areas which could be further refined to provide better outcomes. For example, a well-developed written set of goals may need more attractive packaging in order to be widely read. Again, there is a need to outline what's desired, then reflect on all the steps in the sequence.

## *7. Recommend any special actions for program enhancement.*

Actions recommended for Academic Advising Program enhancement including suggestions in CAS Guidelines:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

**- even excellent programs have areas which could be further refined to provide better outcomes**

**- again, outline desired ends and intermediate steps**

Once more, here are the first seven steps in using the *Guides*:

1. Determine a self-study approach. How will you use raters?
2. Decide on any inclusion of guidelines. Are there parts of the guidelines important enough to your institution to be added to the assessment criteria?
3. Examine criterion statements before making preliminary judgments. How well do you think the program will rate in terms of compliance?
4. Identify and summarize evaluative evidence. What documentation and other support do you have for your ratings?
5. Describe discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice. What is missing in your program?
6. Delineate required corrective actions. What do you need to do in order to bring your program into compliance?
7. Recommend any special actions for program enhancement. What else do you want to do to improve your program?

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[The facilitator now takes over the training more fully, handing out the relevant Guide and setting up the next part of the training to be more specific to the interests of the audience.]

Here is the *CAS Self Assessment Guide* for _____. Let's work through these seven steps, using criterion statement _____ on page ____.

[Depending on the size of the group and other factors, the facilitator may decide to do this as a whole-group exercise or may break a large group into smaller work teams. In either case, it may be helpful to display some transparencies again as each step is discussed.]

# REVIEW OF STEPS

1. *Determine a self-study approach.*
2. *Decide on any inclusion of guidelines.*
3. *Examine criterion statements before making preliminary judgments.*
4. *Identify and summarize evaluative evidence.*
5. *Describe discrepancies between assessment criteria and actual program practice.*
6. *Delineate required corrective actions.*
7. *Recommend any special actions for program enhancement.*

After explaining the nature of a given program, reviewing all documentation, and recommending specific actions, the self-study group needs to prepare a statement of overall action. In the action plan, practitioners can acknowledge strengths, then develop a strategic approach for correcting deficiencies and selectively enhancing other program aspects.

The point is to identify and prioritize future directions, after comparing past performance with desired outcomes.

Let's look at the details of such a plan.

## 8. *Prepare a statement of overall action.*

SPECIAL NOTE:

Using "Actions needed [required] for compliance" and "Actions recommended for program enhancement" entries, proceed to develop a follow-up action plan [refer to page vi].

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***Identify and prioritize future directions, comparing past performance with desired outcomes.***

Here is an outline of the recommended CAS Standards Self-Study Follow-Up Action Plan:

A. Areas of Excellence

1. Review the self-study and identify the areas in which the program excels.

B. Required Actions

2. Review the completed self-study and list each assessment criterion identified as not being in compliance with the CAS Standards. Note discrepancies which need attention.

3. Review the completed self-study and list each of the specific actions identified as being required to bring the program into compliance with the Standards.

4. Establish a priority list of required actions needed to bring the program into compliance with the Standards on the basis of their overall importance to achieving the program's mission and primary goals and objectives.

# STRATEGIES

STRATEGIES

## SELF-STUDY
## FOLLOW-UP ACTION PLAN

### A. AREAS OF EXCELLENCE

1. Review self-study for areas in which program excels.

### B. REQUIRED ACTIONS

2. List each criterion with discrepancies.

3. List each specific action required for compliance.

4. Establish priority of required actions on the basis of their overall importance.

C. Program Enhancement Actions

5. Review the completed self-study and list each of the specific actions recommended to strengthen and enhance the program beyond the essential requirements.

6. Establish a priority list of the recommended actions for program enhancement on the basis of their desirability and feasibility.

D. Program Action Plans

7. Establish an action plan for initiating and implementing the changes required to bring the program into compliance with the Standards and that also incorporates actions to introduce the recommended program enhancement changes.

8. Set dates by which specific actions are to be completed.

9. Identify responsible parties to complete the action tasks.

This outline is also printed as the last part of the introductory section to the *CAS Self Assessment Guides*. You'll find it on pages v and vi.

## C. PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT ACTIONS

5. List each specific action recommended to strengthen and enhance the program (beyond the essential requirements).

6. Establish priority of recommended actions.

## D. PROGRAM ACTION PLANS

7. Make an Action Plan to implement required changes for compliance and also incorporate actions for program enhancement.

8. Set dates for completion of specific actions.

9. Identify who is responsible for completing the action tasks.

Having looked at the entire self-study process, let's spend a minute thinking about potential uses for the *CAS Self Assessment Guides*.

**One obvious use is in preparation for accreditation visits**. The structure of the *Guides* forces practitioners to take a comprehensive look at their programs and practices, a useful preliminary during any institutional self-study.

**A second use would be for other external evaluations**. If a professional association has site visit teams available or if a state agency decides to review programs, the *Self Assessment Guides* can provide a useful review structure.

**A third use would be for internal program development or evaluation**. Particularly where a given aspect of a service delivery may be weak, the *Self Assessment Guides* can be used to help determine whether a particular functional area is offering minimally-acceptable programs and services.

**A fourth use might be in staff development**. Going through the process outlined in the *Self Assessment Guides* encourages staff discussion about important topics and allows everyone a chance to learn about the various areas of student services and development programs.

What other uses can you think of now?

# USES

- accreditation preparation
- other external evaluation
- internal program development
- staff development
-
-
-

Finally, remember that the CAS self assessment process is a dynamic one. Once you've used the *Guides* in a self-study at your institution, please let CAS know what you found useful and what you'd like to see changed.

Also let the leadership of your CAS member professional association know about any changes you think need to be made in the *CAS Standards and Guidelines* themselves during the next revision.

Your CAS Director and Alternate Director are_____
_____and _____
whose addresses are listed in the CAS Directory.

Thank you for your time today. Best wishes as you begin putting the CAS Standards to work at your institution.

# *Suggestions*